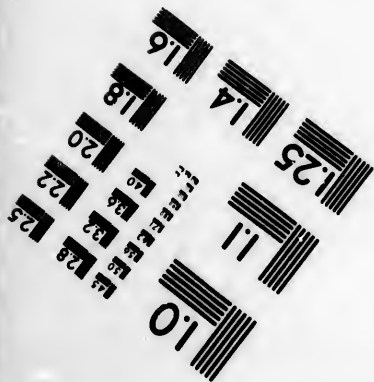
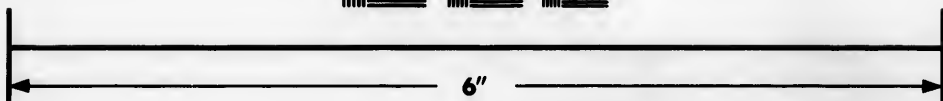
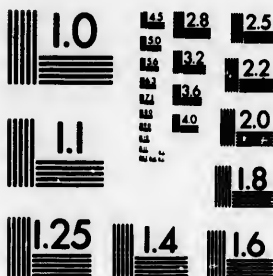


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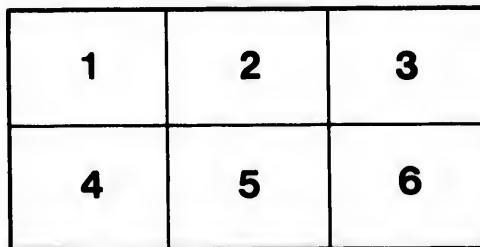
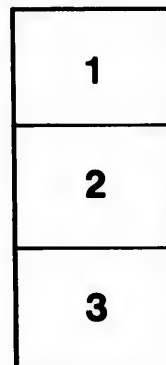
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ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT
THE INAUGURATION
OF THE
CHARLOTTETOWN
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION,

ON THE EVENING OF FEBRUARY 6, 1856.

By the Rev. **WILLIAM SNODGRASS.**

(LIEUT. HANCOCK, R. N. ONE OF THE VICE PRESIDENTS,
IN THE CHAIR.)

With Appendix,
CONTAINING
THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION.

CHARLOTTETOWN:
STEAM POWER PRESS OF HASZARD & OWEN
1856.

A. D. R. E. S. S.

BY

W. H. R. E. A. D.

JOHN W. R. E. A. D.

AND

W. H. R. E. A. D.

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**TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CHARLOTTETOWN YOUNG MEN'S
CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.**

GENTLEMEN,

The following address is published at your request, and I have much pleasure in dedicating it to you, in its present form. From the response that was given by the Inaugural Meeting, to the sentiments it contains, I derived much satisfaction. It will certainly be a great enhancement of that feeling, if the circulation of these pages effect, in any measure, the good you anticipate.

I remain,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

W. SNODGRASS.

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ADDRESS.

MR. VICE PRESIDENT, AND CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,—

Although, for reasons which need not be specified, it was with considerable reluctance and anxiety that I undertook, by request, the duty which I appear before you this evening to discharge; yet I feel an honest pride in avowing, that, in view of the excellent Institution which we are assembled to inaugurate, the present is one of the happiest hours of my life, and that, in point of honorableness, the position which I now occupy is second only to the status to which I was raised, when, "with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery," I was authorized to take part in the sacred ministry, with my brethren of the Protestant Church. Fully three years I have been engaged, in this place, proclaiming the message of reconciliation and mercy to sinners, and endeavoring, by the preaching of the word, to build up Christians in our most holy faith. All that time I have been surrounded by christian ministers and evangelical congregations. Oftentimes I have experienced, and oftentimes expressed in earnest supplication, a desire for a more abundant provision, in means and opportunities, than has hitherto existed, for the furtherance, by mutual aid and encouragement, of that glorious cause in behalf of which the Christian Ministry was appointed. But, not till now, has there been erected a common platform, sufficiently divested

of denominational peculiarities, and furnishing the requisite facilities and amenities, for the several Protestant clergymen and members of the several Protestant Churches to meet together—with a frequency and in a way to warrant the expectation of the desired success—in the advocacy, the enforcement, and defence, of the essential principles of our common Christianity, and in the living illustration, which will thereby be afforded, of the many and various characteristics of our distinctive unity. When, therefore, I consider what has been, and what I expect henceforth to be, I claim the privilege of asserting, that I have been relieved of a great and painful annoyance, and that my heart is now exceedingly gladdened by the formation of an Institution, around which all may rally, and which, from its unequivocal and decided character, may become an everflowing fountain, permeating, by the diversity of its appliances as by so many channels, the whole community, and conducting, to our several hearts and homes, such kindred views and common sentiments as will sap the foundations of many an existing barrier, overthrow many a hurtful prejudice, and dispel, by their softening and soothing influence, many a groundless acerbity—I refer to “The Charlottetown Young Men’s Christian Association.”

We are here this evening, publicly and openly to lay our hands to what may be called, the crowning act in the organization of this Institution. It is a spiritual edifice which we are engaged in raising. We have, therefore, as was meet, employed from the first, and we are pledged to employ to the last, the spiritual weapons of Christian consultation, patience and perseverance,

INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

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prayer and praise. The foundation has been laid. The superstructure has been advancing; and, with its goodly pillars, unyielding buttresses, and rows of "lively stones," it can boast, at this moment, of a substantial and intelligible form. The internal furniture and apparatus have been to some extent supplied. And now, it is thought, that the character which it has assumed for size, arrangement, proportion, and utility, is such, that the greater part of the temporary scaffolding may be removed, without the fear of scrutiny from the initiated members of the sacred craft, yet with the confident anticipation of commanding the regard, the patronage, and co-operation, of the uninstalled.

It is my business to lay before this large and respectable audience—itself, I trust, a reliable omen of good things yet to come—some statements that may serve to show you the importance attached to Young Men's Christian Associations, which, within a few years, have come to be numbered by hundreds throughout Christendom, and to apprise you of the advantages which we expect you, under God's blessing, to reap from a kindred institution established in this city. In doing so, I should have occasion to refer, more or less directly, to the objects proposed, and to the agencies which have been devised for their attainment.

The character of the Institution, as witnessed by its designation, is so unmistakably explicit, that, at the moment its title is announced, few, if any, will fall short of a very correct idea regarding it, and so eminently suggestive, as to awaken immediately, the liveliest and holiest sympathies which the religion of Jesus inspires. A very passing reference to this point will, therefore, suffice.

He, who is the only Head of the Church, is the recognised Divine Head of this Association, which is held to be subservient and has been proved, in other lands and in many ways, to have been subservient, to the increasing spirituality and stability of the Church. Professed faith in the doctrines of the Gospel, and that faith working by love, is the avowed principle of union which binds its members in one body. Divine grace is the acknowledged gravitating law, by which their mutual relationship is sustained and their common dependence upon the Sun of righteousness, the great source of spiritual life and light, preserved. Strict conformity with scriptural requirements, in all their corporate arrangements, measures, and proceedings is an essential element of existence. The life of Jesus, as the Son of man, is the guiding star of their conduct; and it is their aim, by constant additions to their knowledge, to bring themselves under the influence of such motives, principles, and exercises, as are best calculated to issue in a growing resemblance to their chosen example. You will thus perceive, that the character of the Institution is a most noble and exalted one; and the experience hitherto has been, that the end contemplated is satisfactorily and successfully accomplished, just in proportion to the maintenance of this character, by the cautious admission of members, the careful direction of agencies, yet free and friendly solicitude, that all may, more or less, participate in the advantages enjoyed.

The composition of this Christian Association is a matter well worthy of special observation. Its active membership, though not exclusively, yet for the most part, comprises young men, who are members, in

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full communion and creditable standing, with one or other of our Protestant congregations—persons who, in the morning of life, have had their eyes opened to the paramount importance of a pious belief and a religious practice, as the most useful aids, of which they can avail themselves in their several callings, and as indispensable requisites to the highest success and happiest termination of their earthly career; who have not been ashamed to express publicly the estimation they have formed of the Everlasting Gospel; and who profess to have imbibed a taste for pure, spiritual enjoyments. With these are associated others, who, though they have not yet taken this distinctive stand, are deemed admissible, because of the safeguard which their good moral character affords; for, being invited to participate in the benefits enjoyed, it is believed they will manifest no desire, as they cannot have any opportunity, to invade or degrade the peculiar sacredness of the Institution. At the same time, their respectful regard for all that is good, honest, and upright, lovely and of good report, is held to be a trustworthy and encouraging ground of expectation, that they will ultimately be persuaded, that a lowly, yet implicit, faith in the love of Christ to sinners, as testified by its ineffable manifestations and responsive awakenings, supplies the strongest motives, imparts the best encouragement, and exerts the most effective impulse, in the study of ethical obligations and the maintenance of a moral life. The members of the Association, then, are chiefly the young, the ardent, the active, the hopeful sons of toil; into whose hands must speedily be transferred every trust, which is now held by their seniors in the community. At present they are surrounded by

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temptations and exposed to contaminating influences, against which they desire to strengthen one another, and from the dominion of which they seek to rescue their compeers, by that most winning and persuasive of all examples, the godly life of a youthful Christian. Our young men are now contracting habits, imbibing principles, and acquiring tastes, which must not only affect their eternal well-being, but must inevitably decide the character of society, when they become its prime movers, and when they occupy its chief places, and must certainly issue, therefore, in a term of happiness and peace, or a season of dismemberment and misery. From their ranks, all the offices in church and state will, by and by, be filled. All the superior relations of domestic life, and all the posts in the commercial world, will be supplied by them with occupants. And if piety to God and love to man, if minds in harmony and hearts in unison with the eternal laws of righteousness and truth can insure, as God's word tells us, and as all history convinces us they will, the greatest amount of immediate good, and the quickest marches of real and enlightened progress—how praiseworthy and becoming! that we should all give them our countenance and support in their present laudable endeavours. Where is the minister or teacher—where, the parent or guardian? who does not feel, that any young man committed to his charge, is, by becoming a member of this association; entering into a relationship which will tend to the realization of his hopes and wishes concerning him, and fit him in a peculiar manner for the most profitable discharge of present duty, Strange as the assertion, and anomalous as the fact may seem, it is nevertheless true, that though any one

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of these superiors, whom I have specified, should himself have no great regard for piety and no very sound appreciation of Christian truth, he yet feels in his heart a secret desire, that his child or pupil should be God-fearing and virtuous in all his ways, and is constrained to admire, and to encourage rather than check, any decided inclination or steady exhibition with reference to these qualities. It would seem that the belief, universally entertained, in the existence of a supreme Being, whatever be the attributes with which imagination or superstition clothes its ideal god, even if it should be so cold and inoperative as to suppress any personal reverence or regard, occasions, at the least, a respect for the homage and service rendered by others. And so, when this belief advances no further than the bare acknowledgment of the true Jehovah, it appears, as in the example of a godless parent admiring and praising a pious son, that men, who are themselves uninfluenced by the fact, can yet commend a regardful reception of it by those around them or connected with them. This is one of those pleasing proofs, which, by the very inconsistencies and contradictions of human nature, are abundantly furnished, that He, in whose hand are the hearts of all, and who turneth them to himself, even as the rivers are turned to the sea, who makes the very wrath and opposition of the ungodly praise him, is, by his multifarious providences, smoothing and protecting the pathway of his people; and it is a fact which contributes its share of encouragement to the Christian benefactor who manifests his zeal in providing means and facilities for the diffusion of religious knowledge and the increase of piety.

It is, in my opinion, one of the most satisfactory and instructive features of these Christian Associations, that their membership is constituted exactly as it is. Persons of maturer years are not excluded. A high value is attached to their experience and judgment. In every department of active management and in all deliberations involving the welfare of the Institution in any community, they may render eminent service, and the extending of their interest and support must, therefore, be a matter of thankfulness, as it is now with us a matter of solicitude. In the opportunity, again, afforded to men of good moral character, of becoming Associates, in the privilege, usually enjoyed by active members, of inviting a friend to accompany them to the religious reading room, the weekly class, or devotional meeting; and in the free admission of the public to the fortnightly lectures, a wide door is opened to an extensive field of most useful and aggressive operations. While the proper composition of the Institution, as consisting chiefly of young Christian men banded together for mutual improvement is preserved intact, they will thus have every facility for the exercise of a far-reaching and pervasive benevolence. While they have the satisfaction of knowing that their affairs are entrusted to judicious management, and their agencies carried forward under a careful superintendence, they may entertain the blessed prospect of effecting many a happy change, and conferring many a lasting benefit. The desire of becoming better themselves will be quickened, while its realization, on this very account more likely, will be simultaneously enhanced by the luxury of doing good. There will be the double joy of mutual

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edification in Christ and of active cooperation with Christ. At the same time that they are filling their lamps with a purer oil and giving forth a brighter and a steadier light, they will be directing the steps of the lame, and reanimating the spirits of them that are ready to fall with renewed courage and repeated efforts. For it must be allowed that one of the most effective means of preserving Christian zeal and Christian affection, in a healthful and active state, is the increasing capacity, commensurate in its exercise, with the increasing opportunities which the man of God discovers at every advancing step, of spending his time and abilities to the spiritual advantage of his fellowmen.

I must not forget to advert to the peculiar relation in which these Christian Associations stand to the Protestant Church, with its unity of aim and spirit, but diversity of external form. It is a source of regret and lamentation to many a pious Protestant, and the Romanist thinks it to be an indication of weakness and glories over it, as a presage of a coming dissolution, that our Church should count its denominations by the dozen, while the attempt to reckon up all the variations of outward aspect is utterly hopeless. The simple reply to this is; that there is a wide and essential distinction between matters of opinion and matters of faith, however much they may appear at times to converge; between the forms of service and the spirit which enlivens them; between the external government of congregations and the elements of spiritual incorporation. Paul and Barnabas differed so widely in opinion, on a certain occasion,* that a separation

* Acts, XV; 36—41

ensued and each adhered to his own policy and plans; but, in their divided state, they were actuated by a common missionary zeal; they were carried forward by a common attachment to the same Master and the same cause; they relinquished not their common hold of the same everlasting truths and the same imperishable realities. And, I doubt not, that, in the great day of disclosure, their respective opinions will be unnoticed, unless by themselves, in the discovery, that what each counted a hindrance to concerted action turned out, the rather, to the glory of God; while, on that day, their common faith and constancy will be rewarded. It was a much more grievous offence,* and it is not to be permitted as an illustration here, but to be regarded as a type of what may be found, more or less, in every worshipping congregation, (no congregation of Romanists, certainly, being an exception)—the offence which evoked the sharp rebuke administered by Paul to Peter, whose position, by the way, at the head of the pontifical roll, may furnish the true reason of the extent to which *dissimulation* is permissible in the Romish Church; for it seems to be impossible to elevate a man, even an Apostle, above his proper level, without, at the same time, giving a lift and a respectability to his sins, as well as his virtues.

A degree of pertinacity in adhering to our respective opinions is allowable, and it will increase or diminish, according to the importance attached to these opinions. But, independently of this and in spite of it, there is a knowledge, a faith, and a love, which stand forth in our estimation of first and mightiest conse-

* Gal., II; 11—14.

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quence. Without them, we are agreed, no man can be a Christian; without them, no congregation or Church can be Protestant: but, through their exercise and manifestation, we discover, in one another, the reflected lineaments of our common Lord, far more attractive, as they ought to be, than mere opinions, forms of service, and modes of government, can be repulsive. The true source of regret and lamentation is not, that there is a diversity of opinion in matters with reference to which that diversity naturally arises and cannot be suppressed without occasioning the most monstrous evils, but that there should ever appear, in all its naked deformity and Satanic influence, so great a spiritual defection in Churches and individuals, as to prove the temporary ascendancy of nature over grace—as, in that day of keen and fiery conflict, when lances gleamed and claymores swung, upon my native hills, to establish my countrymen's determination:—Prelacy may do in England, but Presbyterianism must reign in Scotland. I am not ashamed to own, that I like much and am zealously and conscientiously attached to, my simple Presbyterianism, which must not be confounded with the weightier doctrine of the cross: but I know that, however useful and however scriptural I may deem it, it will not satisfy the cravings of my immortal spirit, nor carry, nor accompany me to the realms of light. The same robes of righteousness, which, appropriated through faith in Christ and the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, shall secure an entrance for the Wesleyan and the Baptist, are indispensable to my admission into the abode of the blessed. The motley garbs, which we wear in time, however fondly cherished they may be, we must leave behind us, to perish in the flames and wreck of earth.

These distinctions, I doubt not, exist now for important ends, at least they are over-ruled and made directly instrumental by omnipotence, for the accomplishment of most gracious purposes. But, is the gratification of a sinless taste or a harmless opinion nothing? Between a number of implements, all adapted to the same purpose and fitted to accomplish the same work, will not a man select the one he thinks most convenient to his handling? while in those, which he rejects, his neighbour finds an ample choice. Or, as in the natural body, there is a great variety of members, widely differing in form, position, and function, so in the churches which constitute the one body of Christ, even as in the congregations and individuals which compose them, there may be diversities in the means which they use, in the forms by which they abide, in the discipline which they exercise, and the government which they maintain,—each worthy of a place and a name, and each ministering materially to the happiness of some Christians, who, in their absence, would find themselves less at home and more disconnected from the great commonwealth of Israel. And the lesson which we are every day learning and the truth which is ever becoming better understood, is just this; that the interest and welfare of the whole body lie, not in the needless multiplication of sects, not in mutual interference, not in unchristian rivalry, not in unholy rancour, but in each doing its own work in its own way, and each, the most that it can in the advancement of the same cause, to the glory and honor of the same Lord. “Now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I

have no need of you."* The Episcopalian cannot say to the Presbyterian, I would get on just as well without you; nor the Presbyterian to the Wesleyan, you are taking my place and obstructing my progress. So long then as taste and opinion hold their present sway and demand their gratification, each denomination must have and be free to enjoy its privileged enclosure. It will erect its lofty walls, and plant its outposts, and lay its bulwarks, broad and deep. But, just as the closed door, and the great stone with the affixed seal, and the watch set over it, prevented not the rising of the Lord from Joseph's sepulchre; so, there is in all, who, once buried with Christ in the true baptism of spiritual regeneration, have also risen with him to newness of life, a faith whose property is expansion, which bursts all outward barriers and seeks its fellowship with the living and not with the dead, and a love which overleaps every separating chasm and scales every intervening height, and delights to add the joy and the strength of its presence to congenial spirits, and to associate with them in the keeping of Christ's commandments and the advancement of Christ's holy cause. May the Young Men's Christian Association which we are now inaugurating, be an embodiment of that Christian unity which is compatible with external

* 1 Cor. XII; 20, 21. This passage is not quoted, as indeed it cannot, without violence, be interpreted, in justification of divisions or separations, as if the more the church endured of them, the better. The church is viewed simply as it is, without any reference to the question, whether or not the present state is the right one--and the above passage is introduced simply in illustration of the tolerant, forbearing, loving spirit, which Christians of one denomination manifest towards Christians of another. Altogether independently of this, a separation or division must approve itself to be right or wrong on its own merits.

disconformity and a manifestation of that Christian spirit, which, while it respects the opinions of a brother, seeks for itself the improving influence of his company, and in behalf of others, the aid of his kindred sympathies and friendly co-operation!

But, not only are these Christian Associations emblematic of leading spiritual truths, which it is well, at all times, to keep in the foreground, and which are practically kept in this, their rightful position, according to the extent and boldness of the emblemizing character of their living embodiment. Their formation is also, in my opinion, prophetically significant. All movements are more or less so. The importance of a single event, even, consists less, perhaps, in the circumstances that individualize and isolate it, than in the relation which it bears and the character which it gives to posterior events—less in the fact, that it happens at all, than in the manner in which its happening affects the decision of questions or struggles that may subsequently arise. From the extent, the earnestness, and the carefulness of to-day's preparations, you can, in ordinary circumstances, forewarn yourselves, more or less accurately, of the nature and issue of to-morrow's contest. In like manner, I feel as if the rapid formation, in our times, of Evangelical Alliances and Christian Associations were portentous of a coming collision between the one body of Christ and the many Anti-Christ's now in the world—each driven, it is true, from its own citadel, by a separate attack, but all apparently fast mustering together under the impulse of a common hatred of the truth—and portentous also of the manner in which the onset will be met and of the glorious result which will ensue. Is it not

the fact, that the infidelity and scepticism of a former age, which were wont to be satisfied with baseless arguments or outspoken ridicule, are now clothing themselves in the attractive habiliments of a gaudy ritualism? And, is not this the very manifestation which the Puseyistical tendencies of the present time are exhibiting of their treacherous alliance with the Papacy? And, where may we look for our defence of all that is dear and sacred to us as Protestants, if not in that spirit of unity and co-operation which is actively moving our churches and gathering the faithful and the true into a freer, a more elastic, but closer fellowship? And, is there not, in the responsive awakenings of kindred sympathies and sentiments, an earnest of the destined triumph and prevalency of the truth as it is in Jesus? You have seen a flock of sheep, as they were feeding peacefully, but stragglingly, on an open pasture, instinctively and simultaneously surprised by the unwonted stillness of the air, the clearer murmuring of the rivulet, the distincter noise of the waterfall, and the dark clouds by which the heavens became overcast—all portentous of a coming storm; and you have seen them gather in a body and hasten forward to the shelter, which nature in the profusion of her bounties, has provided in the neighboring hedge or thicket. So now does it appear, as if many Christians, young and old, dispersed throughout our various denominations, were taking warning from the ominous signs of an approaching crisis—in view of which, whether or not a gracious Heaven forefend it, they do well to seek the strength which is in union, and the peculiar increase in the consciousness of security derived from a common refuge.

I must leave myself time to address you, for a little, on the object of these Christian Associations. This is avowed to be, the spiritual and mental improvement of their members and the increase thereby of vital religion in the community. This statement implies much that is interesting and instructive, as it proposes much of the noblest description. It is sufficiently intelligible, but it is also very comprehensive; and I can only advert to a few of the many topics it suggests for discussion.

One cannot but rejoice in the distinct impression which it produces, of the strong and decided persuasion that is entertained, in the quarter whence it emanates, of the susceptibility of the human mind of an unceasing progress and an endless improvement. The grounds, upon which this persuasion rests, we recognize to be the same also, with the convictions which render the impression produced in us, by the declaration just made, a possible, and an easy result. Let us attend to a few of these.

There is the testimony of consciousness, which reveals to us the *spirituality* of our own inner being, and the various individual qualities, which, in virtue thereof, it natively and essentially possesses; and there is the testimony of observation, which establishes, on a full and most diversified induction, these same disclosures with reference to every member of the race. The great truths which we are taught, by this combination of evidence; the basis of the soundest and surest philosophy, are these; That the thinking part of man, by whatever name you may choose to designate it, is perfectly distinct from that other class of substances to

which we apply the general term, body; and that the qualities of the one are, in no way, similar to those of the other; although there exist many points of agreement between the various individual objects which compose each class. Thus every body which you subject to the examination of the organs of sense, exhibits characters that are common to every other object of sense, however much these may differ among themselves. In like manner, every individual mind is endowed with qualities and capabilities, alike in nature to those of every other mind, however great may be the variations occasioned by the modifying circumstances of constitutional tendencies, peculiar idiosyncrasies, or a special education and training. The minutest particle of matter, which you can raise upon a needle's point, possesses, as fully, the essential qualities of hardness, divisibility, and shape, as the mighty globe upon which we live, with its oceans and continents. And so, the prattling babe, playing with his toys at his mother's feet, contains, within his little form, a spirit as necessarily active and indissoluble as a Newton's master-mind, grappling with the greatest discoveries of ancient or modern science. The savage, gathering pebbles by the sea shore, has as necessarily a spiritual being as the astronomer, who tells the order and evolutions of the various stars which stud the nocturnal heavens. And, whether we regard, in an objective aspect, those fruits of labouring centuries, which in this our day and generation lie scattered about us in rich profusion, like so many gems of truth which sparkle as they guide, or so many stars of glory, beckoning the more adventurous of our race to yet

nobler discoveries; or, whether we identify with their authors those monuments of moral grandeur, intellectual greatness, and mental daring, which lie open to our perusal in the works of the great and the good—we see the activities of the human soul laid bare, and its capacities for unceasing progress manifested. We thus learn, that there is a firm and solid basis, in the essential characteristics of our spiritual nature, developed, as these may be, to almost any conceivable extent, whereupon we may rest the hope of accomplishing much, by our united efforts, in the way of mutual improvement, and upon which we may proceed with the most extensive benevolent operations for the enlightenment of the species.

It is true, as I have already hinted, that all intellects are not alike comprehensive, even as all minds are not equally stored with knowledge, but this does not affect, in any instance, the question of the soul's capabilities. From the little that is known by the peasant, unlearned in books and untutored in science, we may deduce the same instructive lesson with reference to spiritual capacity, as from the works of the philosopher, who, with practised eye and highly disciplined mind, is busily engaged in unfolding new discoveries or setting at rest the most complicated questions. The homely farmer, who tills and improves the earth, may hear little of the wondrous doings of the scientific investigator, and yet be encouraged, in his task of self-improvement, by the amount of simple truths which he has already mastered. At all events, there is one kind of knowledge, and one species of advancement, far better than those which human philosophy can impart, and in them he may excel. He is capable of knowing

and loving his God with a pure heart and fervent spirit; of advancing, by a daily progress, in the way of salvation opened up by Jesus Christ, and of becoming renewed more and more, in the powers and affections of his inner being, after the image of his holy Maker.

It is by the right exercise, the careful direction, and proper cultivation of these spiritual capacities, that their possessor may most honorably occupy his place at the head of animated beings—that he may best sustain the crown of glory and honor with which, as Heaven's deputed delegate, his brow is encircled. In this way only can he return, by an unending process of assimilation, to a close alliance with the angels and with God himself, the creating, all-pervading Spirit, even while he is influencing most powerfully and benefiting most extensively his fellowmen.

I would refer to another fact, which is at once a proof of the correctness of the persuasion, as to the importance of the object contemplated by those who seek this high improvement of themselves and others, and a reason for the exercise towards them of our Christian sympathy and aid, namely, the *immortality* of the soul, so clearly brought to light in the Gospel, in corroboration of the natural presentiment or desire of the human spirit. "At death, the body," a beautified, but material structure, "shall return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return to God who gave it." The soul is destined to live throughout the ceaseless duration of eternity, and this fact, taken in connection with man's accountability, stamps upon the desire and the effort after spiritual improvement a most incalculable importance. For, as it is true, that

the soul of man is necessarily active, and must have employment in some shape or other, we are at once forced to admit, that the purest and most spiritual exercises are not only the best suited to its nature, but indispensable to its everlasting happiness. And, as the event of death is the shutting of the door to our present probation for the endless state of being which lies beyond—who is competent to estimate the depth of declension to which man may sink, or the height of glory to which he may rise, when, emerging into an interminable existence, he finds himself still a spiritual being, but a being who has, erewhile, unalterably decided his own fitness or unfitness for the enjoyment of celestial purity?

I am sure I do not misstate or exaggerate the views of those who make this clear and decided declaration of the object they have before them, in the associating of themselves together for mutual improvement, when I say, that the sacrifice which was made by Christ for the redemption of their souls is the chief reason that urges them to the zealous strengthening of their common fellowship, and to the utmost qualifying of themselves, by religious knowledge, mental exercise, and holy living, to honor God and benefit their fellow-men. They stand before us with the unmistakable acknowledgement, that, in the light of the cross, they have settled the respective claims, upon their attention and regard, of all that is perishable around them and of that undying spirit which is within them. They bid us accept it as their decision, honestly come to, or rather, as their concurrence freely given to the Saviour's own adjustment of the greatest of all questions

—That the immortal soul is superior to the perishing world in all its unmeasured extent and unestimated treasures. And well they may! For, contemplate the pre-existent dignity of the Redeemer—the brightness of the glory of God and the express image of his person. Compare therewith the deep humiliation to which he voluntarily submitted. And then, read in the words of inspiration, the motive which urged and the object which induced him to lay down the life he had assumed—“*He loved us and gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.*” What a thought is this!—The Creator of our souls assuming the fashion of a man and submitting to be wounded for our transgressions, and to be bruised for our iniquities. Yet this is the *exponent* of the estimate at which He, who knows the value of everything, has reckoned the soul. This globe upon which we live is but a small speck in his vast dominions. Add to it ten thousand similar worlds. Exhaust the fields of measureless expanse, which are studded thick with orbs like this. Imagination fails to dare the computation. Yet a ransom, infinitely superior in value to them all, is the redemption-price of the human soul! This is God’s own estimate. In beautiful and striking accordance therewith is the view which the most exalted of God’s creatures entertain upon the subject. The highest intelligences—the angels, who surround God’s throne and cease not, day or night, in performing God’s pleasure, who gaze on all the wonders of the universe, who engage in the most sublime pursuits, who, of all created beings, comprehend most fully the purposes of Jehovah, and estimate most correctly the relative importance of things, can yet account it a ground of just and joyful emotion, that one soul is saved!

These considerations, which I have advanced, stamp the soul with a transcendent value, prove its capacity for ceaseless progress, and furnish the chief persuasions for resorting to all such means and exercises as tend to its improvement. And, is not the practical influence and the practical result of the greatest of them all, in strictest harmony with the very object of this Christian Institution?—for Christ died, not only to redeem men from the guilt of sin, but also to purify them unto himself “a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” It is a fact, which cannot be too broadly or frequently asserted, that, in view of our present capacities and future destiny, mental and spiritual improvement, in its highest and most legitimate sense, is identical with the right exercise of our faculties, in the study of all that pertains to the peculiar truths, the essential principles, and historical phenomena of Christianity. And surely, in all that has happened from the fall to the present day; in all that is included between the dawning of the first promise and the fulfilment of the last prophecy; in the preparation of the world for the advent of Christ; in the history of the Church and of the nations since the day of Pentecost; in the consistency of Revelation with all that is true in science and philosophy; in the confirmation of ancient scripture by modern discoveries; in the subserviency of all providential occurrences and of all useful inventions to the extension of the Redeemer’s kingdom; and, more than all, in the exhaustless treasures of wisdom and knowledge which are hid in Jesus—there are abundant materials for spiritual and mental improvement—for the strengthening, in connection with devotional zeal, of all that is worthy of the name of piety.

I shall conclude with a statement, which I desire to be considered as addressing especially to the members of this Association, namely, that piety is the best aid in the acquisition of knowledge, and its growth, the highest object to be achieved by the attainment of knowledge. The time was, and it is not long since gone by, when knowledge, the result of patient study and extensive learning, was greatly underrated, in the estimation of many, as an auxiliary to the increase and usefulness of piety; when, for example, a man was thought to be efficient enough, in the public teaching of divine truth, provided only he were zealous and fluent, in the enunciation of doctrine and the enforcement of duty. This narrowminded and shortsighted idea is now almost entirely exploded, and it is high time that it should be so, for it is founded upon a most complete misconception. The truth is, that piety, an indispensable and the highest qualification for the right discharge of all duty, feeds and grows upon knowledge, at the same time that it quickens the desire of knowledge into a pure and steady flame. The more we know of all truth, the greater shall be our reverence for Him, who is, "The Truth," and a becoming reverence for Him will never fail to inspire our souls with an eager and a holy seeking after a more intimate and accurate acquaintance with his character and ways, as manifested in nature, providence, and grace. You have to remember, also, that He, who presides over the developement of the Church, who arranges every event in her history, and who is preparing her for her brilliant destiny, is the Saviour of his people, not alone by the sacrifice of himself, but also because he hath *all things* placed in sub-

jection unto him, as King, until he shall, and that he may, deliver up the kingdom, in its completeness to the Father. From this fact we may infer, what otherwise we know to be the case—that there is not a single truth, there is not a single discovery, whether it pertains to science or Scripture, to the facts of history or the phenomena of nature, to the structure of language or the laws of mind, which may not, more or less effectively, awaken the sentiments and evoke the adorations of piety, according as it is seen to be a token of a presiding and overruling Deity, or an interesting vehicle, of which we may avail ourselves, in the communication and enforcement of that best of knowledge, which alone teacheth savingly and to profit. But what you have to remember is this;—that an intellect swung loose from the sobering influence and guiding dictates of piety, however great it may be naturally, and an imagination unchecked in its flights by the fear of God, have ever been fruitful in evil, damaging to the highest of personal interests, and disastrous to the peace and prosperity of the Church. On the other hand, when we enquire, Who have been the real benefactors of our race?—a host of names, enshrined in our memory, and giving a salutary tone and a substantial form to our undying gratitude, at once recurs to us—names of the great and the good of every age,—the most successful discoverers, the most ardent reformers, the most devoted patriots, the most impressive preachers, and the most effective writers—suggestive alike of the piety by which they were sustained and directed, of the knowledge by which their minds were invigorated and enriched, and of the noble deeds, which survive, like undecaying fruits, in the world they have beautified

and blessed. The result of my own observation, extending over a period of seven years in the University of Glasgow, during which I had an opportunity of coming in contact with students from all parts of the world and of every phase of constitutional temperament—if it be worth anything—is this; that the most punctual, the most attentive, and the most faithful in the discharge of their various duties, of all my fellow-students—they who made the most satisfactory progress in all the departments of study—though they were oftentimes, by the very range and diversity of their pursuits, not the most highly distinguished in particular branches—were the godly and the prayerful. Their piety impelled them to the acquisition of knowledge, while it kept their faculties in due subjection. Their increasing knowledge was a powerful incentive to piety*

* Those who heard the address may discover in this last paragraph, as occasionally in the preceding pages, a slight difference of expression and even of illustration from what was employed at the time of delivery. The reason is, that, while the greater part of what was spoken had been previously written, the notes were not exclusively followed. The last paragraph was altogether extempore and has been written for publication, from recollection.

APPENDIX.

CONSTITUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE I.

The title of this Association shall be, "The Charlottetown Young Men's Christian Association."

ARTICLE II.

The object of this Association shall be,—the spiritual and mental improvement of young men, by means of,

1 Devotional meetings; 2 Classes for Biblical instruction; 3 the delivery of Lectures; 4 the establishment of a Library and Reading Room.

ARTICLE III.

Any person, who is an acknowledged and consistent member of one of the Protestant Churches, may become an *Active Member* of this Association—he entitled to vote and be eligible to office—on the annual payment of seven shillings and sixpence, if of the age of twenty-one, or upwards. To any person under that age the annual payment shall be five shillings.

ARTICLE IV.

Any person of good moral character may become an *Associate Member*, on the terms mentioned in article III, and enjoy all the privileges of membership, except voting and being eligible to office.

ARTICLE V.

Any member of the Association may become a *Life Member*, on the payment of three pounds or upwards, at any one time.

ARTICLE VI.

The several Protestant ministers of the City of Charlottetown shall be *Honorary Members* of the Association, and *ex officio* members of the managing committee.

ARTICLE VII.

The officers of this Association shall be a President, four Vice-Presidents, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Librarian, all of whom shall be elected annually by ballot.

ARTICLE VIII.

An Executive or Managing Committee consisting of all the officers of the Association and two members from each Protestant denomination, shall be annually appointed. It shall be the duty of this Committee to manage all the affairs of the Association, make bye-laws, appoint special Committees, fill up all vacancies, decide on all applications for membership, and annually report on the state and progress of the Society.

ARTICLE IX.

The annual meeting for the election of office-bearers and the transaction of general business shall take place on the first Monday in January.

ARTICLE X.

Special meetings, for the transaction of any particular business, may be called at the discretion of the Committee or at the written request of any of the Vice-Presidents and six members. Seven members of the Committee are required to constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE XI.

The regular meetings of the Association shall be held once a fortnight, beginning at a suitable hour in the evening, and continuing not later than half past nine.

ARTICLE XII.

All meetings of the Association and of the managing Committee shall be opened and closed with prayer.

ARTICLE XIII.

It shall be the duty of the President, or, in his absence, one of the Vice-Presidents or the senior member of the Committee to preside at all meetings of the Association and of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE XIV.

The Secretary shall keep a fair and correct record of all proceedings of the Association, give notice to the members of the time and place of holding the annual meeting and of any special meetings, preserve copies of all business-letters written by him, and draft annually a report of the Society's proceedings subject to the approval of the Committee.

ARTICLE XV.

The Treasurer shall collect all moneys due the Association and expend the same under the direction of the Committee, keep a list of the names of members and a correct account of all the receipts and expenditure, and lay an abstract of the same before the Association at its annual meeting.

ARTICLE XVI.

The Librarian shall take charge of all books, periodicals, newspapers, and all other documents belonging to the Association, and preserve a correct catalogue of the same. He shall also enter in a book kept for this purpose the numbers of all books delivered to the members and the names of parties by whom the books may be injured.

ARTICLE XVII.

This Constitution may be altered or amended by a vote of two thirds of the members present at any annual meeting of the Association: but, intimation of any alteration or amendment must be given in writing at one of the regular meetings and all the members must be notified thereof, at least one month, previous to the holding of such annual meeting.

